

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 SAM-01 /065 W

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R 280918Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3645

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FPRO, XF

SUBJECT: RECENT PRESS INTERVIEWS BY KING HUSSEIN

1. SUMMARY: RECENT INTERVIEWS BY KING HUSSEIN WITH SAUDI RADIO STATION AND LE MONDE (JAN 21) AND AL-AHRAM (JAN 25) REITERATE FAMILIAR RECENT THEMES: NEXT WAR WILL BE A HOLOCAUST JORDAN STILL SUPPORTS PLO AS SOLE PALESTINIAN REP BUT WOULD CONSIDER JORDANIAN NEGOTIATING ROLE IF ASKED BY ARABS, AND WOULD BE WILLING GO TO GENEVA IN ANY CASE; KING REITERATED FEDAYEEN WILL NOT BE ALLOWED RETURN TO JORDAN. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCOUNTS PRINTED IN JORDANIAN PRESS GENERALLY MATCH SENSE OF FBIS TEXTS, WITH LOCAL HEADLINES STRESSING KING'S COMMENTS ON CATASTROPHIC NATURE OF POSSIBLE UPCOMING WAR AND JORDAN'S WILLINGNESS TO ATTEND GENEVA IN UNDEFINED CAPACITY "IN ORDER TO AID OUR PALESTINIAN BROTHERS". LOCAL PRESS ACCOUNTS OMIT, HOWEVER,

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KING'S COMMENT TO LE MONDE THAT AFTER OCTOBER 1973

WAR, JORDAN SUGGESTED THAT ISRAEL ARMY WITHDRAW LIMITED DISTANCE FROM JORDAN RIVER; "IN THIS WAY ONLY JERICHO WOULD HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO ARAB SOVEREIGNTY. MR. KISSINGER DESCRIBED OUR OFFER AS VERY REASONABLE " (FBIS LD211521). FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, LOCAL ACCOUNTS ALSO OMIT KING'S STATEMENT TO LE MONDE THAT "OUR ATTITUDE (IN ANY FUTURE WAR) WILL BE A STRICTLY DEFENSIVE ONE...I STILL BELIEVE THAT OUR DECISION NOT TO OPEN A THIRD FRONT DURING THE OCTOBER WAR WAS WISE...".

3. MAIN POINTS OF INTERVIEWS HAVE FOR MOST PART BEEN HEARD BEFORE.

A. RELATIONS WITH PLO. KING REPEATEDLY STRESSED HIS SUPPORT FOR PLO AS SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, WHOM HE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT UNTIL THEY CAN SET UP INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ENTITY. LOCAL PRESS INCLUDED HUSSEIN'S COMMENT THAT IF ARAB STATES SHOULD FORCE AMMAN TO ACT IN PLACE OF PLO, HE WOULD "TAKE IT INTO CONSIDERATION". (LE MONDE COMMENT: "THE KING'S REPLY...REVEALS HIS SECRET HOPES".) HUSSEIN ACKNOWLEDGED PRESENCE OF PLO OFFICE IN AMMAN (AL-AHRAM AND FBIS BE241717).

B. LOCAL PRESS HIGHLIGHTED KING'S STATEMENT THAT JORDAN WILL NOT ALLOW FEDAYEEN TO RETURN.

C. KING SAID THERE ARE NO CHANGES CONTEMPLATED IN PASSPORT AND NATIONALITY LAWS WITH RESPECT TO PALESTINIANS.

D. WHILE STRESSING THAT RABAT GAVE NEGOTIATING RESPONSIBILITY TO PLO, JORDAN WILLING TO GO TO GENEVA IN NOT-TOO-WELL-DEFINED CAPACITY IN ORDER TO AID PALESTINIAN BROTHERS.

E. NEXT WAR WILL BE HOLOCAUST. "AT THE PRESENT TIME I SEE NO SOLUTION."

COMMENT: PLO OFFICE IN AMMAN IS ACTUALLY ONE-MAN OPERATION IN EXISTENCE SINCE 1971 (AS IS TAME PALESTINE LIBERATION ARMY--PLO--UNIT) AND KING'S REFERENCE TO IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY DESIGNED TO CONVEY IMPRESSION OF PLO PRESENCE TO SHOW HIS ADHERENCE TO SPIRIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF RABAT. IN ACTUALITY, HOWEVER, PLO ACTIVITIES ARE CLOSELY CIRCUMSCRIBED. KING'S REFUSAL FLATLY TO RULE OUT POSSIBLE JORDANIAN ROLE IN MIDEAST NEGOTIATIONS, HOWEVER QUALIFIED, IS A SLIGHT MODIFICATION OF HIS EARLIER POST-RABAT EMPHASIS ON LINE THAT THERE IS PROBABLY NO ROLE FOR JORDAN IN NEGOTIATIONS. PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WAR, LIBERATION FRONTS, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975AMMAN00637
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750031-0070
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750116/aaaaanrl.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <19 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RECENT PRESS INTERVIEWS BY KING HUSSEIN
TAGS: PFOR, XF, LE, PLO, (HUSSEIN I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006